

Glenolden, PA – With nearly a quarter of a million members, Pennsylvania has the largest Department in the American Legion, which has been an advocate for Veterans since its inception in 1919. This Monday, Pennsylvania's Murray-Stuart Post 566 in Glenolden held the Pennsylvania American Legion Eastern Section Testimonial, which honored National Commander Martin "Marty" F. Conatser and Department Commander Robert C. Miller, Jr. In attendance was Congressman Joe Sestak, who is a member of the American Legion Post 227 in Springfield. — Congressman Sestak addressed the Veterans and their families, and spoke about the long-term importance of the American Legion and their commitment to fighting for Veterans' rights. "Having worn the cloth of this nation for 31 years in the U.S. Navy I fully understand the work that the American Legion has done on behalf of Veterans for nearly a century," he said.

"I would further like to commend Marty Conaster and Robert Miller for their years of service to The American Legion," the Congressman added. "Their strong leadership sets an example for Veterans across the nation, and I thank them for it."

Since taking office in January of 2007, Congressman Sestak has drafted and voted in favor of legislation that supports active military members, Veterans and their families. He recently voted for, and the House of Representatives passed the Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2007 (H.R. 4253). The bill will provide America's Veterans and reservists some of the economic security they deserve by: strengthening federal efforts to expand opportunities for Veteran-owned businesses; providing new small business loans and expanding outreach to veteran-owned small businesses; strengthening relief to small businesses employing National Guard or Reserve troops.

He also voted for the Heroes Earning Assistance and Relief Tax Act (H.R. 3997), which includes tax provisions intended to assist military personnel and their families, Veterans and public service volunteers. In addition, he supported the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill which provided the largest single increase to the Veterans Administration budget in its 77 year history — \$6.7 billion additional dollars for the Veterans Administration. With passage of this bill, the 110th Congress voted for historic increases in Veterans' health care and benefits programs, totaling nearly \$12 billion (including the joint resolution and the supplemental), to meet the needs of returning Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Congressman Sestak also successfully passed two amendments to H.R. 1538, the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act, which will improve mental health care for our wounded soldiers as well

as our Veterans. The first amendment highlights the fact that mental health care is an essential component to the medical services offered to our Veterans and the members of our Armed Services by clarifying that “medical care” as defined in H.R. 1538 includes mental health care services. The second amendment requires the Secretary of the Department of Defense to develop a plan to help prevent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other stress-related psychopathologies (including substance abuse conditions) from developing in our military service members. Both amendments passed with unanimous support.